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September 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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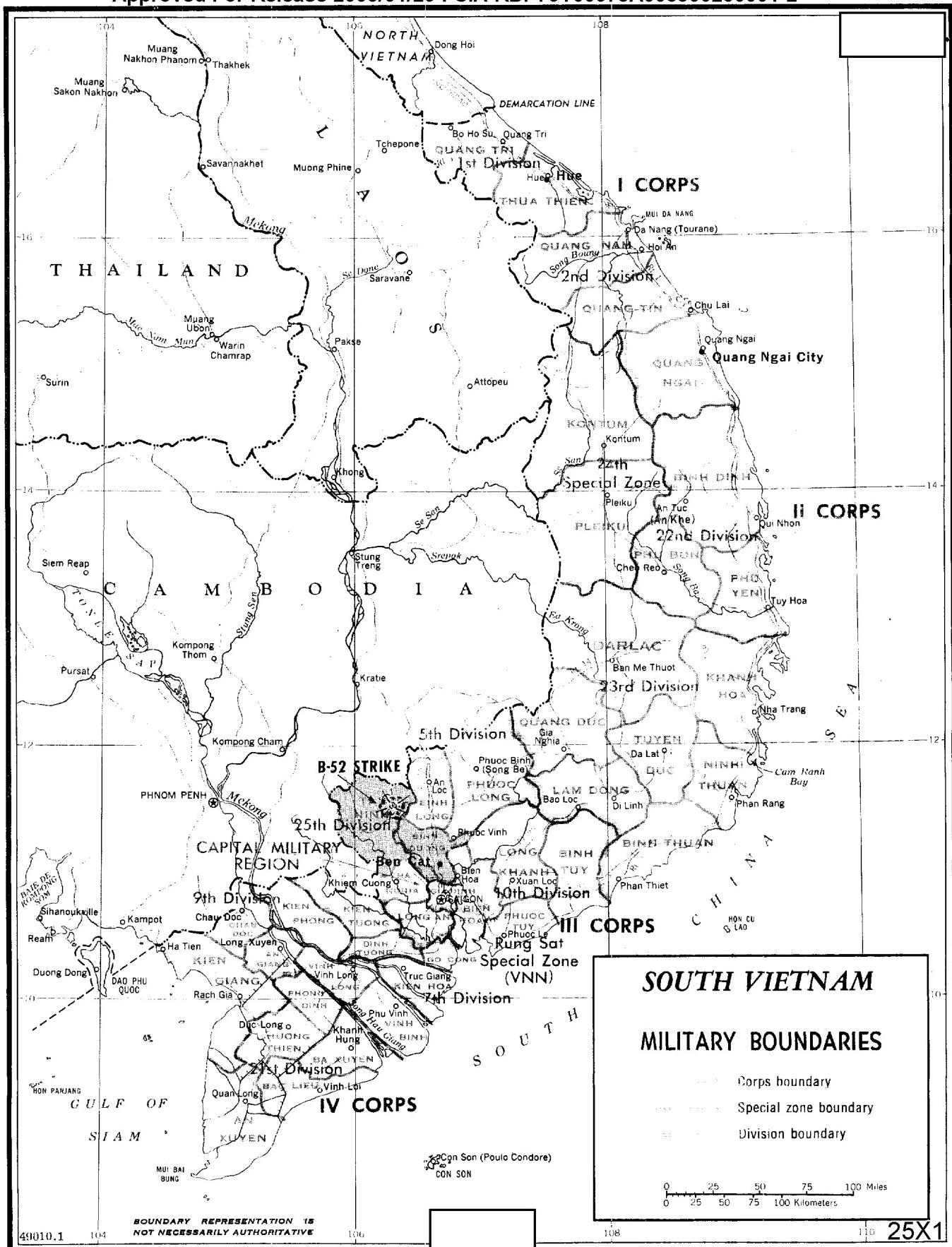
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* Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EDT)

The Military Situation in South Vietnam: There are further indications of a slight pick-up in Viet Cong military activity.

South Vietnamese troops claim to have repulsed a two-company Viet Cong attack on 26 September against a government outpost southwest of Quang Ngai city, inflicting losses on the guerrillas of 48 killed, and suffering moderately heavy casualties among the posts' paramilitary defenders. The Viet Cong reportedly withdrew under air attack.

Elsewhere, a Viet Cong force reportedly estimated at 500 struck the defensive positions of two Vietnamese Ranger companies about 20 miles northwest of Saigon, but casualties to the government troops were light. About 12 miles south of Saigon, another Viet Cong assault, reportedly in company strength, resulted in apparently heavy losses among a government paramilitary unit.

A company-size Viet Cong force overran a government outpost 90 miles southwest of Saigon early today and inflicted heavy casualties on a militia platoon.

The bulk of forces from the combined, large-scale search and destroy operation, involving a US-Vietnamese-Australian-New Zealand task force, in the Ben Cat area of Binh Duong Province, north of Saigon, are now being withdrawn. Cumulative Viet Cong casualties in the operation to date are listed as 46 killed, 78 captured, and an estimated 69 wounded. Friendly losses remain unchanged at six killed and 44 wounded.

Eighteen B-52 US Stratofortresses on 26 September struck in two waves an area of Tay Ninh Province, about

40 nautical miles northwest of Saigon, suspected to contain Viet Cong underground ammunition and supply facilities and to be near the operational area of two Viet Cong infantry battalions and a heavy weapons battalion. A total of 918 750-pound bombs were dropped on the target area, but no ground follow-up operation was planned.

Political Developments in South Vietnam: Following the Viet Cong announcement that two US military prisoners had been executed as a retaliatory measure, Premier Ky yesterday told the press that South Vietnam would continue to carry out both private and public executions of convicted Viet Cong terrorists and sympathizers. He described public executions as "needed" to serve as a deterrent.

Meanwhile, the US consul in Hué reports that the first issue of a weekly newspaper being published by the Hué "student struggle" committee was strongly flavored with neutralist and anti-American themes. Although there have been rumors that the students would resume open protests, the paper gave no hint that any early meetings or demonstrations were contemplated.

North Vietnamese Political Developments: Hanoi on 27 September rebroadcast in English significant portions of an earlier Vietnamese language article apparently designed to define North Vietnam's position on arranging a negotiated settlement of the war, and to give the appearance of flexibility on this problem.

The broadcast asserted that the problem uppermost in Hanoi's mind is its concern that the US intends to perpetuate the division of Vietnam into two parts by insisting that US troops remain in South Vietnam. Hanoi's answer to this is that the US must withdraw its troops if there is to be a final settlement of the war. It repeated earlier DRV statements that North Vietnam demands that the US "accept withdrawal" of its troops. As to the timing of such a withdrawal, the broadcast implied that Hanoi will be flexible.

(continued)

The broadcast also emphasized that Hanoi will not agree to a withdrawal of Viet Cong troops to North Vietnam as a quid pro quo for withdrawal of US forces. It argued that such an arrangement would leave the South Vietnamese army in control of the country.

The importance which Hanoi attaches to US recognition of the Liberation Front as a partner to any negotiated settlement was underscored by the broadcast. It predicted that the US will have to deal with the Front in the end just as the French had to deal with the Viet Minh and the Algerian National Liberation Front.

The broadcast claimed that the principles embodied in the DRV "four points" and the Liberation Front's "five points" should be accepted by the US since they amounted to "a much lower price" than some of the provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements.

In particular, according to the broadcast, the North Vietnam and Liberation Front agreement that reunification should be reached "step-by-step" amounts to a concession by the Communists since under the Geneva Agreements the nation would have been reunified by a nationwide election in 1956.

In attempting to portray DRV flexibility on the subject of negotiations, the broadcast said North Vietnam was willing to negotiate a settlement of the war anywhere at anytime provided the US accepted Vietnamese conditions.

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Dominican Republic: Garcia Godoy has not as yet used the pressures of his office to demand that the rebels turn in their arms and bring about the integration of the rebel sector into the capital.

He has made a number of controversial concessions to leftists and is apparently prepared to make more. For example, no real effort was made to prevent the return of ex-President Juan Bosch on 25 September, or the take-over of the University of Santo Domingo on 23 September by a heavily Communist-influenced rump university council. Also, Garcia Godoy gave way last week to leftist demands that the top management of the government-owned sugar corporation be replaced, and selected the choice of Bosch's Dominican Revolutionary Party for the job of corporation president.

Garcia Godoy continues to vacillate over pressing the rebels to disarm and disband their zone. [On 26 September he was proposing to oust armed forces chief Rivera Caminero as part of a "package deal" to obtain rebel compliance with the terms of the settlement signed on 31 August. However, after a series of conversations that day, including several with US Embassy personnel, Garcia Godoy said he "had decided against any immediate changes in the armed forces leadership."]

Garcia Godoy's present course of action appears to be encouraging an already strident left to increase its demands while weakening the support for the interim regime by the business community, moderates, and the Dominican armed forces.

*Garcia Godoy told Ambassador Bunker yesterday that the integration of rebel military elements to their respective services would begin today. Garcia Godoy indicated, however, that he expects difficulties and incidents to mar the integration process.

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